

New Coin World Almanac is worth its weight in gold

By Roger Boye

Quick: What was the record price for one ounce of gold?

How much is the rarest Jefferson nickel worth?

Who's a scripophilist?

The answers to those and perhaps a million other questions are packed into the fifth edition of the Coin World Almanac, a proverbial one-stop reference. The 744-page tome wins my vote as the most useful hobby-related gift item on the market this year.

Editors of Coin World—a weekly newspaper—present much of the material in narrative form with a detailed index for quick checking, just as they did in the fourth edition issued three years ago. Updated sections on gold, silver and coins as investments are delights to read.

The book also pulls together dozens of lists, such as a retail price guide to U.S. and Canadian coins by date and mint mark. The editors include sections on how to detect counterfeits and how to order coins by mail, tips missing from many more expensive catalogues.

In short, the almanac is an accurate, comprehensive repository of facts, well worth the cost. To order a soft-cover copy, send a check for \$14.95 to Coin World Almanac, P.O. Box 150, Sidney,

Ohio 45365.

P. S. Gold peaked at about \$850 a troy ounce in January 1980; a 1939-D nickel—the rarest Jefferson in uncirculated condition—retails for as much as \$47.50; a “scripophilist” collects financial documents, such as stock certificates.

● If you're on a tight budget, consider giving your hobby-minded friend a 1988 coin calendar produced by Krause Publications. Each month features a full-color picture of a U.S. silver dollar, and some of the date boxes include tidbits from numismatic history. The \$5.95 calendar can be wall-mounted or folded for desk use. To order, write to Krause Publications, 700 E. State St., Iola, Wis. 54990.

Krause also has released the 1988 edition of “Standard Catalog of World Coins” by Chester L. Krause and Clifford Mishler, a 1,632-page reference that lists the retail values of nearly every coin issued in the world since 1806. For a copy, send a check for \$29.95 to Krause or call some local coin shops.

● If you're still groping for ideas, remember that just about any collector would cherish a gift certificate from a neighborhood coin store. Most hobbyists would prefer a certificate to select their own keepsakes than to receive coins as a gift.